



# Environmental News

FOR RELEASE: MONDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2003

## Smart Growth Grants and New Portfields Initiative Announced at Brownfields Conference

Dave Ryan 202-564-7827 / [ryan.dave@epa.gov](mailto:ryan.dave@epa.gov)

---

Five communities are receiving awards to incorporate smart growth into planning, revitalization, and redevelopment efforts. EPA Acting Administrator Marianne Lamont Horinko presented a total of \$400,000 to the communities of: Allegan, Mich.; Toledo, Ohio; Lancaster County, Pa.; Emeryville, Calif.; and the Downriver Community Conference, Southgate, Mich.

The announcement was made today at the "Brownfields 2003 - Growing a Greener America" Conference in Portland, Ore. These communities, selected from 35 applicants, were chosen because their proposed projects will result in smart growth redevelopment; link Brownfields redevelopment to open space preservation and improve redevelopment of specific Brownfields sites by application of smart growth principles.

"The Smart Growth grants emphasize the importance of basing redevelopment decisions not only on cleanup and reuse issues, but on a variety of important community goals, including clean air and water, multiple transportation options, economic development and quality of life," said Horinko. "The grants focus on projects featuring innovative community actions and Brownfields redevelopment that can be used as models across the country."

Also announced at the conference was the "Portfields" Initiative, a federal government interagency effort -- led by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) -- aimed at working with port communities in revitalizing waterfront areas, improving marine transportation (such as barges), and restoring and protecting coastal resources. Three port cities will receive federal support in the cleanup and reuse of Brownfields contaminated properties: New Bedford, Mass.; Tampa, Fla.; and Bellingham, Wash. Each port was selected for its strong commitment to redevelopment, its particular needs, and the quality of its proposal to work with eight different federal agencies on the Portfields Initiative. EPA will assess the needs of the port cities and provide technical support in the cleanup of any Brownfields site.

The federal agencies involved in partnership with NOAA on Portfields are: EPA; the Economic Development Administration; the Maritime Administration; the Department of Labor; the Army Corps of Engineers; the Department of Interior; and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The Brownfields Program encourages redevelopment of America's 450,000 abandoned and contaminated sites. Redevelopment approaches have included the conversion of industrial waterfronts to river-front parks, landfills to golf courses, and rail corridors to recreational trails. The Brownfields Program provides funding incentives, feasibility tools, and individual grants up to \$1 million to help States, tribes, communities and other organizations assess, safely clean up, and reuse Brownfields. EPA's Brownfields assistance has leveraged more than \$4.6 billion in private investment, helped create more than 20,000 jobs and resulted in the assessment of more than 4,000 properties.

Also announced at the Conference was the first ever Brownfields stakeholder report, titled, "Reusing Land, Restoring Hope." In the report, EPA highlights the significant milestones and accomplishments of the Brownfields Program – from the first pilot grants in 1993 to the passage of the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act in 2002, which authorizes up to \$250 million in funds annually for Brownfields grants, including up to \$50 million for the assessment and cleanup of low-risk petroleum contaminated sites.

"The report," said Horinko during the opening plenary session at the Conference, "shows how cleaning up Brownfields improves the environment and public health, and how reuse of these properties has brought economic vitality back to blighted communities."

The Brownfields Conference, running today through Wednesday, is co-hosted by the International City/County Management Association ( <http://www.icma.org> ) and the City of Portland. With more than 3500 people pre-registered, this conference will be the largest EPA co-sponsored Brownfields conference of the eight annual ones held to date. The program includes more than 130 different technical sessions and workshops, over 50 roundtable discussions, an extensive exhibit hall and presentations of the Phoenix Awards, which were created in 1997 to recognize highly innovative yet practical remediation projects which bring Brownfield sites back to productive use.

Learn more about the Smart Growth Grants at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/brownfields> and the Portfields Initiative at:  
<http://www.noaa.gov> and the Stakeholder Report at: <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields> .